

Autopsy Shows Head Injury On Man Found Hanged in Cell

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A 24-year-old West Philadelphia man found hanging in a police cell 10 days ago suffered a blow to the back of his head, an independent autopsy has revealed.

Preliminary findings of an autopsy performed by Allegheny County pathologist Cyril Wecht showed that Larry P. Cross had a one-half to three-quarter-inch laceration and abrasion in the rear of his skull.

Gerald Garfinkile, attorney for the Cross family said that Wecht indicated to him that "the bruise was sufficient to cause serious hemorrhaging and unconsciousness."

Attorney Gerald Garfinkile, who requested the independent autopsy after the Cross family disputed the "suicide" ruling of the original post-mortem examination, said he will seek a coroner's inquest based on Wecht's findings.

Cross, who was employed as a \$10,000-a-year baker for a Cherry Hill, N. J., firm, died July 21 at Lankenau Hospital where he was taken the night before by police from the 19th District, 61st and Thompson sts.

Although Montgomery County Coroner Dr. John Hoffa ruled the death a suicide, the Cross family — including his wife, Hattie, who was with him at the time of the traffic citation, challenged the ruling.

GARFINKLE SAID Wecht conducted the autopsy Friday



Cyril Wecht

in the Philadelphia Medical Examiner's office.

About 6:30 P. M. on July 21, Cross, his wife and children, Tracey, 5, and Scheryl, 4, were traveling east on Vine st., when their car got stuck in heavy traffic behind a slow-moving District 19th police car.

AFTER CROSS passed the vehicle, he was stopped by the police inside and issued a ticket for passing too closely. When Cross refused to pick the ticket up from the floor of the car where it was thrown, he was pulled from his car and taken to the station.

The city medical examiner has disputed Wecht, who has not yet submitted a final report. Rizzo has defended the police and Specter announced that an inquest will be held. HR(8/4/72)